



# HEARD ACROSS MONTANA

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## IM Technical Committee Meeting

By E. Wing Spooner [espooner@mt.gov](mailto:espooner@mt.gov)

The Interoperability Montana Technical Committee (IMTC) met in Helena on Mon., July 25 and addressed several Decision/Information Requests (DIRs) related to cable protection at the Blacktail Site, a new tower at the Fox Creek Site, microwave options at the Bull Mountain Site and recommendations for reinforcing shelters and tower placement at hostile sites.

It was reported that contractors who perform environmental assessment work are being identified so as to comply with FEMA Information Bulletin 271 related to NEPAs. If infrastructure money already is allocated for a site, the IM Finance Committee has directed Project Management to initially use that money for contract work to meet NEPA requirements.

Bob McWilliams reported on recent Administrative Sub-Committee decision making. The sub-committee signed off on a Certificate of Completion for the 7.4 Upgrade of the Master Control Site by Motorola. The committee also approved Motorola's 12-site System Design Criteria. A DIR for MacDonald Pass antenna cables was approved as well along with DIRs for generators and exhaust change orders at the Timberline, High Flat and Nixon sites. A DIR for the Stark Armory tower study also was approved in addition to a Harris-Stratex work order for completion of the Lewis and Clark ring upgrade.

Consortium representatives gave reports on activities within their jurisdictions. Butch Renders, Richland County DES Coordinator, reported for the Eastern Tier, saying that Roger Smith, Montana Highway Patrol, was performing final site walks on the Fallon and Makoshika sites this week which ensures that IM best practices were adhered to and that the Statement of Work was completed, leading to final acceptance of the completed infrastructure.

IMTC Chair and Beaverhead County Solid Waste Manager Bob McWilliams reported for the I-15/90 Corridor Consortium. He explained that work on the Lost Creek site and the entire south leg has been delayed because of NEPA requirements. Field work is taking place now so that work can commence early next spring. However, an environmental contractor is currently performing Environmental Assessments on four sites and an engineering work on the south leg is scheduled to be completed this summer.

Jack Spillman, Flathead County Radio Administrator, reported for the Northern Tier, saying that work on the grounding and generator at the Blacktail Site has begun. He also said that a revised budget estimate has been obtained for the work needed on the Big Mountain Site.

Peggy Glass, Park County 9-1-1 Coordinator, gave the South Central Consortium report. She said that Park County went out for bids on the Myers Flat site. County

Commissioners will award the contract next week. Work on the Kenyon Water Tower site is complete, and a punch list of final work items is being developed. The Gallatin Microwave Ring is scheduled for installation beginning on August 7. Motorola's trunked equipment is installed. Once the microwave is operational, which is expected this fall, Motorola will turn on the trunking equipment. Fleet mapping also needs to take place.

Tom Smith, Northrop Grumman, reported for both the Tri-County and Western consortia. The correct LMR cable was installed at Mac Pass and the 50-ft tower extension also was completed. He also updated the group about snow damage that occurred at the Pat's Knob site.

Under the Frequency Sub-Committee report, Jack Spillman emphasized that channel guard tones need to be assigned to all the mutual aid frequencies. A lot of digital noise is occurring on mutual aid channels, and the sub-committee will be addressing this issue. Dave Clouse, Northrop Grumman, gave the Network Design report. Bit-error rate testing is being conducted on the western leg of the Northern Tier, and the project is close to being at a point where it can be used. Frequency interference issues are being addressed on the microwave hop between Santa Rita and Mt. Royal. The microwave is being linked from the Hill County Sheriff's Office in Havre to the Master Control Site in Helena. Trunking should be operational this fall.

Pete Mohan, PSSB, reviewed the latest draft of the Site Development Process Document. Processes related to core sampling were discussed and a resolution to the issue was added to the document. The IMTC formally adopted the document as amended.

The next IMTC meeting will be Monday, August 25 in Room 172 of the State Capitol in Helena, beginning at 9:00 am.

## Montana to Get \$2 Million for Operation Stonegarden

By E. Wing Spooner [espooner@mt.gov](mailto:espooner@mt.gov)

Montana's U.S. Senators Max Baucus and Jon Tester announced last Friday, July 25, that 11 counties on Montana's northern border will receive \$2,030,000 to help address critical homeland security needs through the Operation Stonegarden program. Previously, the program was only for security on America's southern border.

Last April, the Heard Across Montana (HAM) newsletter reported that the Public Safety Services Bureau, in support of Northern Tier Project Director Sheriff Wayne Dusterhoff and the Northern Tier consortium, contracted with a grant writer, Jim Oppedahl, to compile and submit the Operation Stonegarden grant. The application represented a great effort by law enforcement to propose collaboration, force multipliers and partnerships to protect the northern border.



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The grant originally requested about \$2.33 million, of which 48% was for overtime and fringe benefits, 2% for vehicle and equipment maintenance, 38% for new or replacement equipment, 4% for fuel and 8% for mileage reimbursement. About \$600,000 of the initial grant request was to support interoperable communications equipment to enhance communications along the border.

Sheriff Dusterhoff and Havre Undersheriff Don Brostrom were instrumental in bringing law enforcement and tribal representatives to an organizational meeting in Havre on March 19. The meeting helped to clarify grant requirements, identify regional needs, and ascertain interoperable communications needs that met county and Border Patrol operational requirements.

"Operation Stonegarden is an excellent local law enforcement/Customs and Border Patrol partnership initiative to enhance the security of our northern border," said Dan McGowan, Disaster and Emergency Services Administrator and Montana's Homeland Security Advisor.

"The northern border is too often forgotten or just plain excluded from federal funds," Senator Max Baucus said. "We cannot allow Montana to become a back door to terrorists and criminals. This money will make a real difference in places where it will do the most good for protecting our country while bringing good-paying jobs to northern Montana."

"It is about time that the federal government started paying attention to the security needs of Montana's border counties," said Tester, a member of the Senate's Committee on Homeland Security. "These folks are often the only eyes on the border, and the federal government needs to do its part to form an effective security partnership with the folks on the ground in Montana."

Here is the preliminary list of county funding:

- |                              |                              |
|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| ♦ Blaine County: \$130,000   | ♦ Lincoln County: \$460,000  |
| ♦ Daniels County: \$70,000   | ♦ Phillips County: \$110,000 |
| ♦ Flathead County: \$320,000 | ♦ Sheridan County: \$80,000  |
| ♦ Glacier County: \$150,000  | ♦ Toole County: \$390,000    |
| ♦ Hill County: \$150,000     | ♦ Valley County: \$110,000   |
| ♦ Liberty County: \$60,000   |                              |

Baucus and Tester said the State of Montana will receive an additional \$6.17 million through the State Homeland Security Grant Program. The program provides financial assistance to states to prepare for terrorist attacks. The money can be used to purchase equipment, protect critical infrastructure such as dams, and conduct training exercises for first responders.

## Upcoming Meetings

### August 4

IM Finance Committee  
Helena • 9:00 am - Noon  
Anderson & ZurMuehlen • 828 Great Northern Blvd.

### August 4

IM Governance Committee  
Helena • Noon - 5:00 pm  
DOC Annex Conf. Rm.; Behind 515 N. Sanders St.

### August 5

IM Project Directors (IMPD) Meeting  
Helena • 9:00 am - 3:00 pm  
State Capitol • Room 152

### August 6

South Central Consortium (SCMIC)  
Big Timber • 10:00 am  
City County Library, 4th Street and McLeod

### August 7

Northern Tier (NTIP)  
Havre • 9:00 am  
Great Northern Inn; 1345 1st St.

### August 13

Central Montana Consortium (CMICC)  
Lewistown • 10:00 am  
City Complex, 305 W Watson

### August 20

Eastern Tier Consortium (ETIC)  
Glendive • 10:00 am  
Law Enforcement Center; 440 Colorado Blvd.

### August 21

I-15/90 Corridor Consortium  
Butte • 10:00 am  
Chamber of Commerce; 1000 George St.

### August 25

Mobile Data Terminal (MDT) Consortium  
Bozeman • 10:00 am  
City Center Motel, 507 W Main St.

### August 25

IM Technical Committee (IMTC) Meeting  
Helena • 9:00 am • State Capitol • Room 172

### August 26

Big Sky 11 Consortium  
Roundup • 10:00 am  
Location to be Announced

### August 27

Tri-County Consortium  
Helena • 10:00 am  
DOC Annex Conf. Rm.; Behind 515 N. Sanders St.